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23 June 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR: MESSRS. [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Accumulation of Items for Consideration of
the Psychological Strategy Board

1. Mr. Dulles has suggested that we start now making an accumulation and tabulation of items which we believe should be brought to the attention of the new psychological strategy board as soon as it is set up and ready for business. Actually, we have already made a beginning in this direction and I think that [REDACTED] are pulling together a list of items in this category. In any case, I should appreciate it if the addressees of this memorandum would consult together and with [REDACTED] with a view to preparing a list of items in this category and accumulating copies of papers, etc., for ultimate referral to the new board. It might be well if one of the addressees or [REDACTED] could touch upon this subject at the next OPC staff meeting and solicit the contribution of ideas and items from the members of the staff. [REDACTED] might maintain a folder in which these items could be placed and retained until the appropriate moment.

2. Attached hereto are copies of two memoranda for the record, which are of more immediate use but which should also be placed in the proposed new file of items. I have mentioned these memoranda to [REDACTED] and requested him to coordinate with [REDACTED] with a view to having these memoranda considered by the individuals here and in the State Department who are concerning themselves with the subject matter of the memoranda at the present time.

F. G. W.

CC: DD/P

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23 June 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Suggested Psychological Operations to Regain the Initiative for Peace - Freedom; Conversation with Mr. John McCloy

1. It is recommended that the suggestions contained in this memorandum of conversation be given very careful consideration in connection with the effort now underway to reverse the trend and recapture the psychological initiative on the issue of peace and freedom. The group now studying this problem at the request of the POCE should have these thoughts called to its attention -- even though it is recognized that the suggestions are not in all respects novel.

2. In a conversation which took place on 18 June and was participated in by General W. B. Smith, Mr. John McCloy, Mr. Allan Dulles and others, Mr. Dulles raised the question as to what psychological measures should be employed in an effort to recapture the initiative. It was generally agreed that the Russian and Communist propaganda machine has scored some notable triumphs in the pursuit of its Partisans for Peace campaign, and that it may be expected to press its advantage to the utmost. The thoughtless, and sometimes unintentionally provocative, statements made by American officials in high position have been playing straight into the hands of the Russians and are being extensively exploited by them. The Russians have singled out the United States as the principal target of attack and accusations, and the label of war-monger and peace-breaker has been altogether too well fastened on to our government. Evidences of this have been seen recently in the so-called neutral press of Europe where articles have appeared during the French and Italian election campaigns, blaming the United States equally with Russia (and in some instances, viz., the very damaging Le Monde article blaming the United States uniquely). Statements of our leaders and others, including unfortunate choices of language, such as "rings of bases around Russia" and the remarks of the "drop-it-now boys" have all contributed to the difficulty of our position.

3. In the light of the foregoing, it appears that declarations of peaceful intent on the part of this government are not good enough. Such declarations are apt to have the ring of self-serving statements and are heavily discounted as hypocritical by friend and foe alike.

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4. It is, therefore, necessary to enlist the assistance of our friends and to organize a systematic campaign of having our friends speak up for us and say the things on our behalf which must be said if we are to be relieved of the stigma. The French, the British, the Italians and others in Western Europe must work to help us through both official and unofficial organs of expression. Also, our friends in the Far East should not be overlooked in the effort to rehabilitate our reputation as preservers of the peace and defenders of human freedom. In Western Europe our friends should come forth boldly with statements condemning the Communist propaganda line as lies and distortions of the plain truth. Affirmatively, they should point to the American record of non-intervention in foreign affairs, calling attention to the few exceptions which we have made to our steadfast rule of non-involvement. These exceptions came from the two great wars when the United States at great cost to itself in treasure and blood came to the rescue of wartorn Europe (these wars having been precipitated by Europeans themselves and not Americans) and threw its great weight into the balance against the aggressors and the oppressors of human liberty of the day. Now for the first time in its entire peacetime history, the United States, at the request and upon the urgent insistence of the Western Europeans themselves, has departed from its tradition and has come forward despite its inclination to the contrary to help the Europeans weave a fabric of strength to ward off the looming and ominous threat of a new aggression.

5. Similar themes should be adduced for application in the Far East, but again the basic proposition is that the more others say for us and on our behalf and the less we are forced to protest our own innocence, the better.



FRANK G. WISNER (COW)
Assistant Director for
Policy Coordination

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